

STATUS OF CLAIMS

1. **(Previously Presented)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.
2. **Canceled.**
3. **(Previously Presented)** The process of Claim 1 wherein said metallic ore is iron.
4. **(Original)** The process of claim 1 wherein said polymer is comprised of at least two polymers.
- 5-6. **Canceled.**
7. **(Original)** The process of claim 1 wherein said polymer and said weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt. % of said mixture.
8. **(Previously Presented)** A process of agglomerating iron ore, said process comprising commingling said iron ore with a moistening effective amount of water, a binding effective

amount of guar and a binding effective amount of citric acid to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

9. **(Withdrawn)** Pellets prepared in accordance with the process of Claim 1.

10. **Canceled.**

11. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 9 wherein said metallic ore is iron.

12. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 9 wherein said polymer is comprised of at least two polymers.

13-14. **Canceled.**

15. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 9 wherein said polymer and said weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt. % of said pellets.

16. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 9 wherein said particulate material is comprised of iron ore, said polymer is comprised of guar and said weak acid is comprised of citric acid.

17. **(Previously Presented)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid, to produce an agglomerating mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

18. **Canceled.**

19. **(Previously Presented)** The process of Claim 17 wherein said metallic ore is iron ore.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The process of Claim 17 wherein said salt of a weak acid is selected from the group consisting of salts of citric acid, salts of tartaric acid, salts of malic acid, salts of fumaric acid, salts of lactic acid and mixtures thereof.

21. **(Previously Presented)** The process of Claim 17 wherein said polymer and said salt of a weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt.% of said agglomerating mixture.

22. **(Withdrawn)** Pellets comprised of metallic ore, and a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, starch, modified starch, starch derivatives and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid.

23. **Canceled.**

24. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 22 wherein said metallic ore is iron ore.

25. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 22 wherein said salt of a weak acid is selected from the group consisting of salts of citric acid, salts of tartaric acid, salts of malic acid, salts of fumaric acid, salts of lactic acid and mixtures thereof.

26. **(Withdrawn)** The pellets of claim 22 wherein said polymer and said salt of a weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt. % of said pellets.

27-36. **Canceled.**

37. **(Withdrawn)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore in the presence of water which comprises mixing said metallic ore with a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of starch, starch derivatives, modified starch and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid to produce a mixture, and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

38. **(Withdrawn)** The process of Claim 37 wherein the metallic ore is iron ore, and said salt of a weak acid is selected from the group consisting of salts of citric acid, salts of malic acid, salts of tartaric acid and mixtures thereof.

39. **(Withdrawn)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore in the presence of water which comprises mixing said ore with a binder consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of starch, modified starch, starch derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof to produce a mixture, and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

40. **(Withdrawn)** A binder composition useful for the agglomeration of metal containing ores consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof.

41. **(Previously Presented)** The process of Claim 1 wherein said guar derivative is selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl guar, hydroxypropyl guar and mixtures thereof.

42. **(Withdrawn)** Pellets prepared in accordance with the process of Claim 17.

43. **(Original)** The process of Claim 17 wherein said guar derivatives are selected from the group consisting of carboxymethyl guar, hydroxypropyl guar and mixtures thereof.

44. **(Withdrawn)** The process of Claim 37 wherein said polymer and said salt of a weak acid together are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt% of the mixture.

45. **(Withdrawn)** The process of Claim 39 wherein said polymer and said weak acid are about 0.01 to about 1.0 wt% of the mixture.

46. **(Withdrawn)** A binder composition useful for the agglomeration of metal containing ores consisting of a binding effective amount of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives, and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of a salt of a weak acid.

47. **(Previously Presented)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, and adding to the ore a binder comprising a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

48. **(New)** A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof, and a binding effective amount of a weak acid selected from the group consisting of citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid and mixtures thereof, but wherein the commingling occurs in the absence of both (1) an alkali metal salt of carboxymethyl cellulose or carboxymethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose and (2) sodium tripolyphosphate, to produce a mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.

49. (New) A process of agglomerating metallic ore, said process comprising commingling said metallic ore with a moistening effective amount of water, a binding effective amount of a polymer selected from the group consisting of guar, guar derivatives and mixtures thereof and a binding effective amount of the salt of a weak acid, but wherein the commingling occurs in the absence of both (1) an alkali metal salt of carboxymethyl cellulose or carboxymethyl hydroxyethyl cellulose and (2) sodium tripolyphosphate, to produce an agglomerating mixture and forming said mixture into agglomerates.